



Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM) Principles of Youth Engagement in Conference Presentations

SAHM's mission is to promote the optimal health and well-being of all adolescents and young adults (AYA) by supporting adolescent health and medicine professionals through the advancement of clinical practice, care delivery, research, advocacy, diversity, inclusion, and professional development. We believe that meaningfully engaging adolescents and young adults in advancing SAHM's mission promotes equity and justice.

We support reciprocally beneficial youth-adult partnerships that align available youth engagement resources and expertise with appropriate levels of youth engagement. SAHM works to model and build capacity of its members to create safe spaces where young people's voices are valued in the initiation, planning, and/or delivery of adolescent health services, programs, policies, presentations and/or research.

We encourage SAHM members to ensure that:

- Young people's voices are heard without judgment, stigma, discrimination, or threat of violence.
- Continued efforts are made to increase SAHM's capacity to meaningfully engage young people, including those who experience marginalization due to any part of their identity.
- When young people are equitably included, their expertise and contributions are considered in a way that results in power-sharing.
- We make a life-long commitment to reflect and act on how our privilege and biases, our own culturally informed values, beliefs, behavioral orientations, and preconceived notions about difference affect how we interact with young people.

We ask all adults partnering with youth to prepare a presentation for the SAHM Annual Conference to follow the principles outlined below:

- Practice cultural humility when working with youth and be mindful of inherent power differentials.
- Foster a respectful and equitable environment for meaningful engagement and learning.
- Allocate sufficient time, resources, and expertise to ensure positive, effective youth-adult partnership.
- Ensure that both youth and adults understand and agree on the scope and level of their engagement. Ideally youth should be involved in the planning and submission stages and included as co-authors on presentation submissions.
- Have a plan for both content delivery and process to ensure a positive experience for youth presenters. While all SAHM members work with youth, not all SAHM members have experience partnering with youth. Have a plan to ensure that everyone's voice is valued and heard.
- Have a strategy to accommodate diverging opinions, thoughts, and experiences between youth and adult presenters.
- Work to everyone's strengths - ensure that both youth and adult partners are leveraging their expertise and what they do best.
- Set clear expectations and preferred forms of communication.
- For additional strategies and youth/adult co-planning conference presentations and activities, see the [Adolescent Health Initiative's Youth/Adult Co-Facilitation modules](#)